



## THIS WEEK IN IRAQ

The Official Newsletter of the Multi-National Force - Iraq

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# MPs, Dogs Sniff Out Explosives

**MOSUL** — U.S. military police in northern Iraq are developing new tactics in an attempt to counter insurgent violence in the Ninewah provincial capital city of Mosul.

In February, the 552nd Military Police Company, based out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, working with military canine handlers, began conducting a series of random traffic searches in downtown Mosul for vehicles transporting explosives.

“If we get detection dogs and start actively seeking them out, it denies the enemy the capability of bringing them out,” said Sgt. 1st Class Michael Ford, platoon sergeant for 1st Platoon, speaking of the explosive materials often used by insurgents to create improvised bombs in houses and roadways.

On Jan. 24, the issue was brought to a head when an estimated 20,000 tons of insurgent explosives detonated in a three-story building in downtown Mosul, resulting in death and injury to multiple



Sgt. Angela Mathern (left) and her bomb-sniffing dog Vinny inspect a cart carrying propane tanks in downtown Mosul during a search of random vehicles for weapons and bomb-making materials. Photo by Sgt. Patrick Lair, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.

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## This Week in News ...

**U.S. Doctors Save Iraqi Baby Girl**



**Iraqis Help Build New Outpost**



**Iraqi Farmers' Union Begins to Grow**

**FOB KALSU** — Sixteen prominent Sayifiyah landowners gathered with members of the Baghdad-7 embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team (ePRT) at Patrol Base Whitehouse in Sayifiyah, Feb. 28, for a farmers' union meeting.

As security returns to the region, Coalition forces are focusing on restoring the agriculturally-based economy in Sayifiyah. Efforts include reviving the poultry and beekeeping industries, increasing the productivity of vegetable farms and creating new industries like fish farming and chicken processing plants.

All of these efforts were discussed at the

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**Press Conference:** Rear Adm. Smith, GoI, USACE, March 2

**Reconstruction Report:** The latest from USACE

**Photo Gallery:** Featuring the Military's Best Photographers

# Soldiers Make Presence Known in Khanassa

**FOB HAMMER** — Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, visited the village of Kesra in southern Khanassa to meet with local leaders, Feb. 24.

Soldiers and leaders, including the commander of the 1-15th Inf. Regt., Lt. Col. Jack Marr, from Minneapolis, visited the village to discuss how Coalition forces can support the area's humanitarian and security needs.

"We have only done air assault missions in the area in the past," said Maj. John Cushing, from Rochester, Mich., the 1-15 Inf. Regt. operations officer. "No one has been there for the reasons we were today. They had not seen Coalition forces driving during the day since 2006."

Cushing said Khanassa has been a hostile area in the past.

"We were unsure of how we were going to be welcomed," he said. "But I think they were just as curious as we were."

The welcome was not what they had expected, Cushing said. Local leaders

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Aircraft from 4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, participate in Operation Iron Boston, delivering ground forces to their objective. Air Assaults get troops on target much faster than traveling over land. Photo by Pfc. Monica Smith, 3rd Infantry Division Public Affairs.

## Air Assaults Get Troops on Scene

**CAMP STRIKER** — Rather than moving Soldiers on the ground through difficult terrain sometimes littered with improvised explosive devices (IED), many infantry units in the rural areas south of Baghdad opt to use helicopters to reach their targets.

"Air assaults extend the abilities of the ground units," said Capt. Joshua Karkalik, commander of Company B, 4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment. "A lot of times the purpose of an air assault is the element of surprise, or the target is not reachable by ground either because of the terrain or because of IEDs," Karkalik said.

When the call comes for these air assaults, the Black Hawks of 4-3 Avn. Regt. take the lead role in transporting the troops to their destinations, but getting Soldiers from Point A to Point B is a complicated process.

The ground troop commander prepares the mission, decides what targets to hit and then works with his aviation representative to create an initial concept of the operation where they lay out what they want, how many people they are trying to move and where they are trying to go.

During the first meeting with the aviators, the Aviation Mission Coordination Meeting, aviators look at the ground commander's intent and try to create an arrangement that would facilitate his plan.

With a plan in place, the aviators present it to the ground commander during an air mission brief.

"This is the 'good idea' cutoff point," said Chief Warrant Officer Joshua Gunter, Co. B, 4-3 Avn. Regt., from River Fall,

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## Moments in Time: Still Images of a People, Land and Culture

